

THE CRITICAL READING CLUB.

Miss Pennethorne regrets to state that the membership of this club seems to be exceedingly small, but she hopes that the books are read by more members than those few faithful who have sent post cards.

The following books have been suggested for the next term, post cards to be forwarded to "Mayfield, Maidstone" by January 1st, 1902:—

The Soul of a People. H. Fielding.

(This book deals with Buddhism as practised in Burmah, but it tells the legends of Buddha in a most graceful and acceptable form.)

The Story of the Bee. Maeterlinck.

(Philosophy and Natural History combined as only a genius could do them.)

Walden. Thoreau.

The Heart of the Empire.

Kim. Rudyard Kipling.

The Letters of Matthew Arnold.

Post cards will be gratefully received treating of any one or more of these books.

POST CARDS.

R. L. Stevenson's *Virginibus Puerisque*.

Childhood, youth, old age, fulness of life in health, and the quiet compensations of even invalids are among the phases of life touched upon by Stevenson with a light and tender hand. He tries to teach us that to show forth the *livableness of life* is one of the best ways of helping others. He points us to the great English sea-captains as examples of those who were undeterred by seemingly invincible circumstances, and praises them for the joy they took in their lives, as well as for the

the actual deeds. "There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy." This is one of the most useful thoughts in this book, of which kindness and a broad view of life are the distinguishing features. To take up our work and lives unshrinkingly and show that each phase and age of life has its own completeness and possibilities of happiness—this is worth living to do.

"We live," says Stevenson, "in an ascending scale when we live happily, one thing leading to another in endless series." So childhood, youth, and old age are each and all stages looked upon reverently by Stevenson who amuses us and impresses us at once by descriptions of them.

D. N.

The Last Phase (Napoleon). Lord Roseberry.

A vivid picture of splendid decay. Pathetic in detail, sympathetic in touch, thorough in workmanship. The English is forcible and clear and carries one on in smooth rolling periods that leave an impression that the right word has been used in the right place. Our sympathies are very much with Gourgand and more with this master. There is a sense of self-control about the book which is pleasant. It is never sentimental.

E. C. A.

Roseberry's *Napoleon—The Last Phase*.

The Last Phase shows plainly the clouds that gather round the setting sun. It is a sad story of the unworthy close of the life of a great man. The book is pleasantly written and its author seems to have fairly weighed and sifted evidence from all sources, but one is inclined to ask—is it worth while to take up the old records of a court which retained all the old pettinesses and jealousies and intrigues when the glory had departed? These last years of Napoleon's life when small annoyances and petty interests occupied him entirely, seem an ironical commentary on his former statement—"I am not a man but a thing."

A.B.C.